

“The opportunity to grow and do new things [appeals to me]. Even in a bad semester with difficult students it eventually ends and you get to start fresh. I have taught many different courses, classroom and clinical and enjoy the challenge.”

The ability to combine both teaching and nursing in their lives remains a strong ‘pull’ factor for current faculty.

“Clinical! I love being able to return to the floor for hands on practice and assisting the students as well as the nurses on the floor advance their level of education.”

“Combining clinical and classroom in my current role is the perfect job for me. I don't get burned out of the clinical setting because I'm not in it full-time, yet I still get to care for patients with direct bedside care.”

Summary of ‘Pull’ Factors for current faculty

The family of factors that appealed to nurses when they first considered a career in nursing education were not substantially different from the factors that keep them in that role today. The only difference was where specific ideas fell on those lists in terms of frequency. Prior to adopting the role, as a group our respondents focused on 1) the professional opportunities and benefits they expected to get from the role; 2) the fact that they enjoyed the act of teaching; and 3) they felt they could stretch their personal influence beyond themselves through the education process. Once they had been in the role their focus shifted. Those initial ideas were still considered important reasons for staying in the role, but now their primary reasons were: 1) creating a nurturing environment in which to interact with students; 2) enjoying aspects of the role they find personally satisfying (being in a learning environment, being challenged, etc.); and 3) extending their personal influence beyond themselves.

“Push” Factors – reasons for avoiding or leaving the faculty role

We asked current faculty members to name the reasons, if any, that the faculty role did not appeal to them when they first considered a career in nursing education. The most frequent response was that they saw no negative aspects, but the next most frequent response focused on the difference in pay between faculty jobs and clinical jobs.

“The salaries are low in North Carolina as compared to other states, but we still need to have the same credentials. I believe when there is a shortage of educators there needs to be an evaluation of reasons affecting that shortage. Funding needs to increase for teaching positions across the state.”

In addition, a large number of respondents mentioned their fear of being unprepared, or lacking some of the skills that would be required in a faculty role.

“Scary and not specifically trained to teach.”

“I needed clinical experience. I felt I needed an extremely strong clinical background before I taught.”

“I was a little nervous because I had worked in a specialty area for a long time, and I knew that I would have to educate myself again on areas that I was not familiar with so I could teach the students the right way to do things.”